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The English Reform Bill of 1867. By JOSEPH H. PARK, Ph.D.
[Columbia University Studies, vol. XCIII., no. 1.] (New York:
Longmans, Green and Company. 1920. Pp. 285. \$3.00.)

DR. PARK has chosen as the subject of his monograph one of the distinctly dramatic moments in the constitutional history of England, when in Robert Lowe's phrase "the bag of the winds was untied", and in Carlyle's, England "shot Niagara". But the dramatic possibilities of the story are here studiously ignored. Many extracts from speeches are quoted, but none that are even tinged with purple, not even Gladstone's famous "You cannot fight against the future" peroration. The author has chosen rather to set forth the facts soberly, clearly, and accurately, and this he has done well, so well that the book is not only informing but interesting in spite of its deliberate restraint.

The main points of the story of Gladstone's failure of 1866 and of Disraeli's triumph of 1867 have been already told, notably by Mony-penny and Buckle in the fourth volume of their recent life of Disraeli. But Dr. Park's study undoubtedly gives us a richer and safer store of information by which we may satisfy ourselves as to the great issues of the Bill. Did the events of the sixties in Italy and America hasten the concession of votes to the working-classes in England and make that concession inevitable? Were events and forces in England moving towards such a consummation regardless of democratic successes elsewhere? Was the Bill only the outcome of party battles, the jousts of politicians playing for power, or were there fundamental reasons why it should come in 1867? Should we give Disraeli the credit for it, or were Gladstone and John Bright the real authors? Was it a conscious step towards democracy?

These questions indicate the plan of the book. They are not always answered in any final way, for an absolute answer is not always possible. The chapters on the working-classes in the sixties and on the popular attitude towards reform illustrate admirably the familiar generalization that not distress alone but distress following prosperity means a storm, and show very clearly why parliamentary reform was regarded with indifference in the early sixties, with passionate insistence in 1867. Though the author quotes with apparent approval Morley's statement that "the Italian revolution of 1860 gave new vitality to the popular side in England" and Trevelyan's that "if democracy triumphed in America, nothing could long delay its advent over here", he gives ample reason for believing that the real causes for the extension of the franchise must be sought in Britain and in Britain alone. And whatever partisans might charge at the time, no one, with this book before him, is likely now to assert that the measure was one of pure party expediency, brought in and carried in order to "dish the Whigs". Equally convincing is Dr. Park's argument for Disraeli's consistency. No one, perhaps, who had read *Coningsby* and *Sybil* needed any argu-

ment, but on the face of it the great Jew's opposition to Gladstone's bill of 1866 and his advocacy of a more radical reform only a year later has seemed to many pure political opportunism, and those who hold such a view will find interest and profit in this admirable analysis of the facts in the case.

We have therefore no criticism of the book to offer. It is not epoch-making; it does not propose any novel point of view or conclusion; it makes no pretence to originality or eloquence. But it is a careful, workmanlike narrative of a great moment in the history of modern democracy, and we are glad to have it.

CECIL FAIRFIELD LAVELL.

Bismarck's Auswärtige Politik nach der Reichsgründung. Von HANS PLEHN. (Munich and Berlin: R. Oldenbourg. 1920. Pp. xii, 381. M. 32.)

THE special study here undertaken has wanted doing, increasingly, for the past ten years. The amount of widely scattered material bearing on the subject has increased beyond the scope of the two or three chapters devoted to it in the usual biography of Bismarck or more general history of the period; the problems involved require treatment at close range and in some detail. Plehn's point of view is far from that of an unprejudiced observer. The son of an East Prussian landlord, for some years a functionary of the Agrarian League, finally a suicide following the German Revolution—the influence of his own political convictions is only too evident in his estimate of Bismarck's work. The writer's last years before the war were spent as a newspaper correspondent in London; and his *Deutsche Weltpolitik und kein Krieg*, published anonymously in 1913, advocated the abandonment of Germany's forward policy in the Near East in favor of co-operation with Great Britain in Africa. The reaction of these associations and opinions upon his treatment of Bismarck's policy is also evident enough. His familiarity with English sources is especially marked. It is worthy of note, however, that no trace is to be found in this book of the theory developed since the writer's death, that an English alliance was one of the primary objects of Bismarck's diplomacy. The *Daily Telegraph* article in 1912, relating the approaches of 1878 and 1887, seems to have escaped his notice.

Bismarck's policy is interpreted, throughout, along the traditional lines marked out by the Chancellor himself. His complete disinterestedness in the Eastern Question and his impartial fairness to Russia and Austria are reasserted without qualification. No attempt is made to reconcile this theory of motives with the admission (p. 136) that Bismarck used all his efforts to isolate Russia at the Congress of Berlin, while cultivating support for Austria, and the statement (p. 302), regarding the combination which checked Russia in 1887, that "Bismarck